

Lower Los Angeles River Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC) Meeting Minutes



Tuesday, June 25, 2024
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Progress Park Auditorium/-Plaza West
15500 Downey Ave, Paramount, CA 90723
WebEx Meeting

Committee Member Present:

*Enrique Baul, LA County Flood Control District (Agency)
Madeline Chen, Central Basin (Agency) Co-Chair
Asha Kreiling, Water Replenishment District (Agency) Co-Chair
*Alysha Chan, LA County Sanitation Districts (Agency)
Stephen Scott, City of Long Beach Parks and Recreation (Agency)
*Isabelle Campiformio, Conservation Corps of Long Beach (Community)
*Melissa Bahmanpour, Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (Community)
*Mary Hillermeier, Tree People (Community)
*Dylan Porter, Port of Long Beach (Community)
Gina Nila, Commerce (Municipal)
Dan Mueller, Downey (Municipal)
Cecilia Salazar, Long Beach (Municipal)
Julian Lee, Lynwood (Municipal)
Adriana Figueroa, Paramount (Municipal)
*Fred Gonzalez, Los Angeles County (Municipal)
Gladis Deras, South Gate (Municipal)
Tara Dales, SGA Marketing, Watershed Coordinator (non-voting member)

Committee Members Not Present:

Erica Maceda, River in Action (Community)

*Committee Member Alternate

See attached sign-in sheet for full list of attendees.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Asha Kreiling, Co-Chair of the Lower Los Angeles River (LLAR) Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC), welcomed all Committee Members and called the meeting to order. Los Angeles County Public Works (Public Works) staff conducted a brief tutorial on WebEx and provided an overview of meeting guidelines and participation instructions for any participants joining online. Public Works staff facilitated a roll call, Committee Members made self-introductions, and a quorum was established.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from February 26, 2024

Public Works staff presented the minutes from the previous meeting. Member Gina Nila motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Member Gladis Deras. The Committee voted to approve the February 26, 2024 meeting minutes with 11 votes in favor, 0 opposed, and 5 in abstention (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

3. Committee Member and Public Works Updates

Member Enrique Baul provided an update on the County Water Plan. The plan, adopted by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) on December 5, 2023, serves as a guiding framework for regional water resilience strategies, emphasizing sustainability and equity. The County Water Plan addresses four key focal areas: regional water supply reliability, groundwater management and quality, small at-risk community resilience and drinking water equity, and watershed sediment management. Achieving these

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goals requires collaboration across the region, crossing jurisdictional boundaries to benefit all communities within Los Angeles County. Public Works encourages water agencies to adopt the plan to guide collaborative water resilience strategies and policy.

Public Works staff provided an update, noting:

- Round 6 Call for Projects will defer Infrastructure Program (IP) project submissions until Summer 2025. Scientific Studies (SS) and Technical Resource Program (TRP) applications can be submitted by the July 31 Call for Projects deadline. This deferral is in alignment with the recent report by the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) and the Board's subsequent motion on Progress and Adaptive Management of the SCW Program. The deferral will enable Public Works to prioritize critical efforts informed by all recent reports, recommendations, and discussions with the ROC and key interested parties, while also allowing prospective applicants the opportunity to refine and enhance their project proposals, leverage additional funding, and engage more deeply with the community.
- In alignment with Board Supervisor Horvath's motion Accelerating Implementation of the SCW Program, The SCW Program has initiated Watershed Planning efforts to facilitate regional and watershed-based planning that identifies project opportunity areas and refines Population Indicators (i.e., targets) that will support strategic investments. This effort will build upon past and ongoing work, incorporate meaningful community input, and leverage available data and best practices to create useful, transparent, and accessible plans and tools.
- At the July/August WASC meetings, the SCW Program Team will kick off facilitated Watershed Planning engagement workshops with the WASCs. At subsequent meetings, the SCW Program team and WASCs will continue Watershed Planning discussions. In November, the SCW Program Team will share the Initial Watershed Plans Framework, and mid next year will conclude with development of the final Initial Watershed Area Plans for each Watershed Area. Following, specific and more detailed Adaptive Plans will be developed. A new SCW Program Watershed Planning Section has been created to lead the work.

4. Watershed Coordinator Updates

This agenda item was combined with item 6c.

5. Public Comment Period

Public Works staff compiled all public comment cards received by 5:00pm the day before the meeting and uploaded them to the SCW Program website. There were no public comments.

6. Discussion Items

a) Ex Parte Communication Disclosure

There were no ex parte communication disclosures.

b) Regional Program Quarterly Report Summary for FY23-24 Q1 and Q2

Public Works staff presented the Quarterly Report Summary and provided project updates. The summary table can be found on the [SCW Program website](#).

Member Nila requested an update on the John Anson Ford Park Infiltration Cistern project. The project proponent was unavailable and Public Works staff will reach out to provide the WASC with an update.

Member Dan Mueller provided an update on the Furman Park Stormwater Capture and Infiltration Project (hereby referenced as Furman Park Project). The project received a Proposition 1 grant for its recycled water component, which includes water extension and park retrofitting. Using City of Downey water funds and contributions from the adjacent school, the project intends to build the pipeline component of the project separately to save costs. Design of the pipeline is nearly complete, with some adjustments needed for the onsite retrofit design. The project team is coordinating with Central Basin Municipal Water District and State

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and County entities. Member Mueller added that some overall project challenges include high costs, partly due to the depth of the pipeline. Creative solutions are being explored to reduce these costs. The project is at 60 percent design completion, with construction anticipated to begin in 2025. Additionally, there are efforts to obtain other grant funds to cover funding gaps.

Member Mueller additionally noted that the Downey Unified School District, and specifically Rio Hondo Elementary School adjacent to Furman Park, is interested in retrofitting its irrigation system and landscaping. The recycled water main will serve both the park and the school.

Member Mueller shared that the Apollo Park Stormwater Capture Project is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to begin the design process and is also preparing to submit a Project Modification Request (PMR). Public Works staff will review the PMR, and if deemed inconsistent with the previous Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP), the project will need to return to the Committee for PMR approval. Member Nila asked if there would be cost savings given the challenge of escalating expenses. Member Mueller responded that the pipeline aspect of the project helps reduce costs, along with City of Downey water funding, which aids in overall expenses. The project is also seeking additional funding to fill gaps.

Upon inquiry, Member Mueller clarified Downey Unified School District's involvement in the Furman Park Project and added that Rio Hondo Elementary is directly adjacent to Furman Park and will be included in the recycled water extension, with one meter for the park and another for the school. Downey Unified School District expressed interest years ago, and has recently reaffirmed the desire to connect. Rio Hondo Elementary School is redoing the irrigation system and possibly the landscaping. Further discussions are planned to explore additional greening components for the school.

Member Adriana Figueroa provided an update on the Spane Park Project, noting that it is currently still in design phase. The project encountered challenges due to lessons learned from previously constructed projects. Adjustments in the design are being made to avoid past mistakes, resulting in a longer design phase. Key issues addressed include clogged filters and the need for wider maintenance areas. These insights are being integrated to improve the current project before finalization.

Public Works staff provided an update on the Lynwood City Park Stormwater Capture Project (hereby referenced as Lynwood Park Project). Public Works staff confirmed that the project originally had a grant from the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC), but the grant was later reallocated to a different project. Oliver Galang (Craftwater) additionally provided an update on the Lynwood Park Project and stated that the 90 percent plans are nearing completion. Galang also mentioned Craftwater's availability to respond to questions about both the Furman Park Project and the challenges encountered in previous projects.

Member Deras shared that the Urban Orchard Project was previously put on hold due to clearance issues. The project plans to submit the final required document this week. The Urban Orchard Project expects a response from Los Angeles County within 60 days. Concurrently, final design revisions and plans to go out to bid are anticipated for July. The construction start date is anticipated for October.

Public Works staff provided an update on the Salt Lake Park Infiltration Cistern Project and noted that funding was provided only for the design phase of the project, with construction costs planned. Galang provided an update on the project, stating that the project design has commenced and are progressing towards 30 percent design completion. Initial site assessments have been conducted. Field investigations are being performed, including assessing the proximity of a landfill under the pool area, to ensure the proposed design is feasible.

Member Cecelia Salazar provided an update on the Long Beach Municipal Urban Stormwater Treatment wetlands portion of the project. The wetlands phase opened to the public in March 2024. Construction of the treatment facilities is still underway, as some issues arose during commissioning. The project is scheduled for completion in Fall 2024.

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Member Melissa Bahmanpour inquired about the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Long Beach Municipal Urban Stormwater Treatment project. Member Salazar confirmed that the ceremony would be held once the treatment facilities are completed, combining the ceremony for both the wetland and the treatment plant portions of the project. Upon inquiry, Member Salazar confirmed that the project is in phase 1, with anticipated construction completion in Fiscal Year 2025-26 (FY25-26).

c) Updated Lower Los Angeles River Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan

Watershed Coordinator Tara Dales provided a summary of FY23-24 activities. Presentation slides are available on the [SCW Program website](#). Watershed Coordinator Dales performed community outreach, holding 39 out of 79 total meetings with interested parties, including multiple school districts, environmental justice groups, consultants, and cities. Watershed Coordinator Dales conducted a gap analysis, sending introduction emails to public cities and regional entities. Watershed Coordinator Dales participated in seven in-person community events, engaging the public on the SCW Program, and collecting community needs survey results. The Watershed Coordination team also participated in four workshops with environmental groups, schools, and climate commissions.

Watershed Coordinator Dales updated the LLAR WASC on FY23-24 metrics and FY24-25 goals. Watershed Coordinator Dales shared five focus areas: understanding community needs, helping solicit new projects, supporting project applicants, raising public awareness, and supporting the WASC. Each focus area included a tactic to address the focus area, FY23-24 goals, FY23-24 results, and the FY24-25 goals.

7. Discussion Items

There were no public comments.

8. Discussion Items

a) Approve the Lower Los Angeles Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan

Member Madeline Chen requested a change to the SOEP on pages 11 and 17. The term "youth groups" should be updated to "advocacy groups" because the groups mentioned do not have a specific age range associated with the organizations.

Member Mueller motioned to approve the "Lower Los Angeles Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan" with proposed modifications. Member Chen seconded the motion. The motion was passed with 16 votes in favor and 0 votes in opposition (approved, see vote tracking sheet).

9. Items for Next Agenda

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday July 23, 2024, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. See the SCW Program website for details.

a) Initial Watershed Planning Discussion

Public Works will conduct three 90-minute Watershed Planning workshops with the LLAR WASC in August, November and Early 2025.

Member Nila inquired about the details of Watershed Planning and its differences from the Gateway Management Authority plans. Member Figueroa emphasized that the previous Gateway Management Authority plans led to several projects deemed technically infeasible and expressed apprehension about creating another water plan.

Public Works staff shared the watershed plans will identify opportunities to accomplish SCW Program goals. The purpose is to create a reference for interested parties to review and understand what has been done and what is planned in each specific watershed. The plans will outline goals, aspirations, and desired outcomes. The plans would not restrict actions but serve as a guide for future initiatives.

Ryanna Fossum (Stantec, Regional Coordination) shared the SCW Program is focused on proactive watershed planning. The first session is aimed to establish shared language across the program, similar to

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the ROC's previous meeting focus on population indicators and performance measures. The first session is intended to be a listening session to understand priorities for the WASC and how existing plans relate to the new watershed plans. Subsequent sessions will bring preliminary ideas back for further discussion and adaptive planning.

Member Nila suggested that the Gateway Management Authority provide a presentation to the LLAR WASC to provide some context on the previous watershed plans created. Member Nila will coordinate with Public Works staff regarding the presentation.

Public Works staff will coordinate with Committee Members and send out a survey to gauge availability and interest in a July WASC meeting.

Upon inquiry, Fossum shared that watershed plans will have a five year timeline, updated on a rolling cycle.

10. Adjournment

Co-Chair Kreiling thanked WASC Members and the public for their attendance and participation and adjourned the meeting.

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			Quorum Present			Voting Items	
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting/ Present?	Alternate	Voting/ Present?	Approve 02-26-2024 Meeting Minutes	Approve the FY24-25 LLAR Strategic Outreach and Engagement Plan
Agency	District	Ernesto Rivera		Enrique Baul	x	a	y
Agency	Central Basin	Madeline Chen*	x	Alex Rojas		y	y
Agency	Water Replenishment District	Asha Kreiling*	x	Rob Beste		y	y
Agency	LA County Sanitation Districts	Dave Pierce		Alysha Chan	x	a	y
Agency	City of Long Beach Parks & Recreation	Stephen Scott	x	Todd Leland		y	y
Community Stakeholder	Conservation Corps of Long Beach	Irene Lopez-Muro		Isabelle Campiformio	x	a	y
Community Stakeholder	Rivers & Mountains Conservancy	Mark Stanley		Melissa Bahmanpour	x	a	y
Community Stakeholder	TreePeople	Manny Gonez		Mary Hillermeier	x	y	y
Community Stakeholder	Port of Long Beach	James Vernon		Dylan Porter	x	y	y
Community Stakeholder	River in Action	Erica Maceda					
Municipal Members	City of Commerce	Gina Nila	x	Thomas Bekele		y	y
Municipal Members	City of Downey	Dan Mueller	x			y	y
Municipal Members	City of Long Beach	Cecilia Salazar	x	Wataru Kumagai		y	y
Municipal Members	City of Lynwood	Julian Lee	x	Pamela Torres		y	y
Municipal Members	City of Paramount	Adriana Figueroa	x			y	y
Municipal Members	County of Los Angeles	Thuan Nguyen		Fred Gonzalez	x	y	y
Municipal Members	City of South Gate	Gladis Deras	x			y	y
Watershed Coordinator Non-Voting Member	SGA Marketing	Tara Dales	x				
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17			Yes (Y)	12	16
Total Voting Members Present		16			No (N)	0	0
Agency		5			Abstain (A)	4	0
Community Stakeholder		4			Total	16	16
Municipal Members		7				Approved	Approved

Attendees
Lower Los Angeles River WASC Meeting
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Alexa Reasoner

Call-in User_2

Carlos Rodriguez

Haley Johnson

Haris Harouny

Jacqueline Mak

Jenny Chau

karen barnett

Marisela Velasquez - LACPW

Mei-Lin Hanna

Melania G.

Michelle Kim JLHA

Natalie Hernandez

Oliver Galang Craftwater

Pablo Forni - LACPW

Paul MEad

Robert Blankenship

Ryanna Fossum, Regional Coordinator

Safe Clean Water

Traci Gleason

Uriel Cobian

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 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address		Signature
Ernesto Rivera	FCD	erivera@dpw.lacounty.gov	P	
Enrique Baul	FCD	ebaul@dpw.lacounty.gov	A	
Madeline Chen	Central Basin	madelinec@centralbasin.org	P	
Alex Rojas	Central Basin	alexr@centralbasin.org	A	
Asha Kreiling	Water Replenishment District	akreiling@ wrd.org	P	
Rob Beste	Water Replenishment District	rbeste@ wrd.org	A	
Dave Pierce	LA County Sanitation Districts	DPierce@lacsd.org	P	
Alysha Chan	LA County Sanitation Districts	alyshachan@lacsd.org	A	
Stephen Scott	City of Long Beach Parks & Recreation	stephen.scott@longbeach.gov	P	
Nancy Villasenor	City of Long Beach Parks & Recreation	nancy.villasenor@longbeach.gov	A	
Irene Lopez-Muro	Conservation Corps of Long Beach	ilopezmuro@cclb-corps.org	P	
Isabelle Campiformio	Conservation Corps of Long Beach	icampiformio@cclb-corps.org	A	
Mark Stanley	Rivers and Mountains Conservancy	mstanley@rmc.ca.gov	P	
Melissa Bahmanpour	Rivers and Mountains Conservancy	mbahmanpour@rmc.ca.gov	A	
Manny Gonez	TreePeople	mgonez@treepeople.org	P	

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 COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE SIGN-IN



Member Name	Municipality/ Organization	Email Address		Signature
Mary Hillemeier	TreePeople	mhillemeier@treepeople.org	A	<i>MH</i>
James Vernon	Port of Long Beach	james.vernon@polb.com	P	
Dylan Porter	Port of Long Beach	dylan.porter@polb.com	A	<i>Dylan Porter</i>
Erica Maceda	River in Action	ericamaceda@gmail.com	P	
Gina Nila	Commerce	ginan@ci.commerce.ca.us	P	<i>GIN</i>
Thomas Bekele	Signal Hill	tbekele@cityofsignalhill.org	A	
Dan Mueller	Downey	dmueller@downeyca.org	P	<i>Dan Mueller</i>
Delfino Consunji	Downey	dconsunji@downeyca.org	A	
Cecilia Salazar	Long Beach	cecilia.salazar@longbeach.gov	P	<i>Cecilia Salazar</i>
Wataru Kumagai	Long Beach	wataru.kumagai@longbeach.gov	A	
Julian Lee	Lynwood	jlee@lynwood.ca.us	P	<i>Julian Lee</i>
Pamena Torres	Lynwood	ptorres@lynwood.ca.us	A	
Adriana Figueroa	Paramount	afigueroa@paramountcity.com	P	<i>Adriana Figueroa</i>
	Paramount		A	
Thuan Nguyen	County of Los Angeles	thunguyen@dpw.lacounty.gov	P	

